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Printer Friendly

Attorney General Abbott Warns Texans About False and Misleading Election Advice Regarding Voter ID

AUSTIN – Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott issued the following information after learning of incorrect, misleading information being circulated by Jose Garza, a lawyer who represented the Mexican American Legislative Caucus:

"A recent news article stated that Jose Garza, the attorney who advises the Mexican American Legislative Caucus on voting rights and redistricting issues, is encouraging Texans to violate or ignore the law. It is always unethical for a lawyer to advise someone to violate Texas law. Even worse, Garza's advice does not inform voters to bring one of the acceptable forms of voter ID. Instead, in an attempt to create a false impression that voter ID suppresses votes, the unethical advice is to come to the polls without the needed ID – even if you might have one – in order to make it look like voter ID laws suppress votes. The only person working to suppress votes is Mr. Garza and his unethical advice not to follow the law and not to present IDs that voters already have or can obtain for free.

"Any voter confusion that happens on Election Day will be due to this damaging and unethical advice. This is a desperate attempt by opponents of voter ID who have been unable to find a single Texan who will not be able to vote because of the law. Given that they can't find anyone who can't vote because of voter ID, this ploy is likely to suppress many more votes than voter ID ever will. Confusing and misleading Texans in order to create an unnecessary lawsuit is disgraceful.

"The law in Texas is that voters are required to present one of several accepted forms of photo ID to vote at the polls in all elections. These forms of ID include:

- Texas driver's license – unexpired or expired less than 60 days;
- Texas personal identification card – unexpired or expired less than 60 days;
- U.S. passport book or card – unexpired or expired less than 60 days;
- Texas concealed handgun license – unexpired or expired less than 60 days;
- U.S. Military identification with photo – unexpired or expired less than 60 days;
- U.S. Citizenship Certificate or Certificate of Naturalization with photo; or
- Election Identification Certificate.

"The news article states that the City of Edinburg, where the upcoming election will take place, has advised its residents to bring one of the forms of ID with them to vote. This is the right recommendation and we commend the city for taking these proactive measures to ensure that their citizens are informed of the updates to state law.

"The individual is also incorrect that Texans will be turned away if they do not produce a photo ID. According to state law, voters who appear at the polls without ID will be given a provisional ballot. That ballot will be counted when the voter presents photo identification to the voter registrar within six days after the election. So no one will

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be turned away from the polls, regardless of whether they bring photo ID.

“As the news article correctly points out, failing to follow state law by not bringing an ID if you have one or have the ability to get one between now and the election will only result in your vote not being counted when it could and should have. Voting is one of our most important rights, and the best advice we can offer Texans is to ignore the voices of those telling you to ignore state law. Instead, make sure you have everything you need in order to vote. If you don't currently have one of these IDs, please take the steps now to get one, including the free Election Identification Certificate that can be obtained at all DPS driver license offices.”
